

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 18, 2008

David H. Petraeus  
General, United States Army  
Commanding Headquarters, Multinational Force – Iraq  
Baghdad, Iraq  
APO AE 09342-1400

Dear General Petraeus:

As you may know, the Senate Democratic Policy Committee (DPC) held a hearing on July 11, 2008 to examine whether faulty electrical work by contractor Kellogg, Brown & Root (KBR) and lax oversight by the United States military has resulted in the electrocution deaths of American soldiers and employees of contractors in Iraq. We have enclosed a copy of the hearing transcript for your review.

Last month, in response to a question for the record submitted by Senator Casey, you reported that at least thirteen Americans have been electrocuted in Iraq since the war began. You also stated that the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) has directed KBR to: 1) implement a theater-wide, full technical inspection of all maintained facilities where no prior inspection was performed; and 2) perform life, health, and safety inspections on all other maintained buildings and to begin any necessary repairs.

We applaud the United States Army for ordering a full inspection of the electrical safety conditions at U.S. facilities in Iraq, but based on the testimony at the hearing last week, we are astounded that the DCMA has tasked KBR with conducting that inspection.

First, we heard testimony at the hearing from two former KBR electricians who documented KBR's poor performance and lax standards in hiring employees to do electrical work. Given this track record, and the fact that a number of deaths have occurred at facilities maintained by the company, it makes no sense to entrust KBR with inspecting electrical safety conditions in Iraq.

Second, as a private contractor, KBR would have strong incentive to describe its own work in the best possible light. In fact, KBR's spokesperson has insisted from the outset -- before KBR has even completed the inspections -- that there is no evidence that KBR has done anything wrong. Thus, the company seems to be prejudging the outcome of its investigation.


Cc: Secretary of Defense Robert Gates  
DCMA Director Charlie Williams Jr.

For these reasons, we request that you urgently reassign the inspection of electrical safety conditions at U.S. military facilities in Iraq to an entity that is both well-qualified and objective.

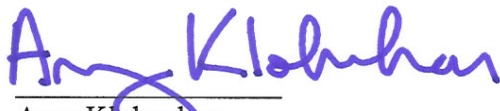
Sincerely,




Byron L. Dorgan  
United States Senator



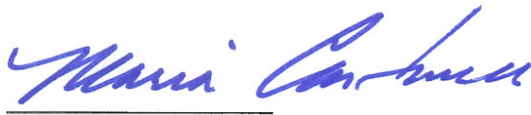
Robert P. Casey  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator